I Do Own my Self to be the Authour of this Diſcourſe concerning *Popiſh Perjuries*, and that it is every Syllable Penn'd by my Self, and Written with my own Hand,

Mar. 19. 1680.

Ric. Beane.

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3.

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DISCOURSE

Concerning

Popish Perjurers

IN AN

ADDRESSE

To the Honorable the

COMMONS of *England*,

In PARLIAMENT Assembled

AT

OXFORD.

LONDON,

Printed for *H. Brome* at the Signe of the *Gun* in S. *Pauls* Church-yard. 1681.

XUM

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YOu have ſo well begun this Seſſion of Parliament, with Reſolutions to preſerve his Majeſty, the Proteſtant Religion and Government, and to Search to the bottom, the Plot lately laid, to overthrow all that the Friends to *England*, and the Proteſtant Cauſe, rejoyce all over *Europe*, and the Enemies of both diſpair of accompliſhing their evill purpoſes, which only the expectation of Diviſions amongſt us gave them hopes to effect.

The Addreſſe of both Houſes and his Majeſties ready Condeſcention for Encouragement of further diſcoveries will queſtionleſſe have the deſired end, and lay open new Miſteries of Iniquity, which hitherto have been hidden and concealed in darkneſs.

But one thing I will requeſt this great Aſſembly to remember, that when *Lucifer* fell

fell from Heaven, he drew the Third part of the Starrs along with him ; And who can imagine that the Pope, the Earthly *Lucifer*, and his Train will ſuffer here a Total Extirpation, without vigorous attempts of like nature ? I think it not Impoſſible, that the Kings Proclamation, how well ſoever it was drawn and deſigned, may be ſo managed by them, as to afford them a fair opportunity of doing miſchief.

It is but Lately they endeavoured to place their own Vizors upon others faces, of which practiſe none of this Houſe , nor ſcarce any Intelligent Man in *England*, can have been ignorant , or ſo ſoon have forgotten.

The Plot put upon the Proteſtants, under the diſtinguiſhing Character of Presbyterians was too bare-faced to gain the belief which they vainly hoped and expected.

But what if they ſhould turn the Dice, and make ſome of you, who are Proteſtants, appear as if you were Papiſts ? though the Plot will

will not be believed againſt you as Proteſtants, Yet as Papiſts it will eaſily be believed if it be Sworn to by Perſons who have been of the ſame profeſſion? and ſuch perſons it is probable may be ſent in by them on pretence of new Converts and freſh Diſcoverers. In ſuch a Caſe as this, I would fain know, which way it is poſſible for you ſo accuſed to be Safe. There is juſt Cauſe to fear your Innocency will not be able to protect you; for your beſt Friends will become your bittereſt Enemies, when once (beſides Treaſon againſt the King and the Government) you ſhall have the Brand of Popery, that Mark of the Beaſt, fixed on you.

Nay, who knows, but ſome ſuch new Diſcoverers, may accuſe the King himſelf to his People, as well as the People to the King, or to the Parliament? and endeavour the opening of ſuch a breach, as can never be ſtopp'd without horrible Confuſion and Deſtruction?

And although it would be the higheſt Nonſence in the World, to imagine the King conſenting to a Conſpiracy againſt his own Life,

Life, and the higheſt Treaſon as well as nonſence to tax his Majeſty with deſigns of overturning the Government, wherein he is ſafe, and whereof he is Supreme; at the coſt of the Lives of his beſt Subjects; to introduce another kind of Government and Religion, wherein he can neither be Safe nor Supreme, nor have his own Subjects at his Command, any longer then it ſhall pleaſe a Forreign and an Arbitrary Power.

Yet what Nonſence will not down with them whoſe Religion is compoſed of little elſe? who teach and embrace an impoſſible piece of Nonſence as the moſt exalted part of their Devotion? And what Treaſon will thoſe men decline who account all Kings Uſurpers whom they have pronounced Heritical? and ſo the Act of deſtroying them at any rate, is no longer Treaſon, but a Zealous, Religious, and Meritorious Duty, for which they are confident to be rewarded with happy Manſions in Heaven.

Such men, amongſt us, whoſe avowed Principles, or Practiſes, are Deſtructive to Society, and Government, our Eſtabliſhed Government:

vernment: (whether they Privately ſwear to a Catholique League; or publickly declare for a *Scotch* Covenant) ought by no means to be endured, but Suppreſs'd, or rather rooted out; yet in the grubbing up theſe ill weeds, great care ſhould be taken, that the tender Corn receive no prejudice.

There is nothing reſtrains men who are ill inclined, from putting into Action their evill Intentions, but fear of Puniſhment, either Here or Hereafter.

Suppoſe now, any Jeſuit or Prieſt, or any of their, or other, blind and zealous Votaries, or any Hackney Rogues provided by them, (ſo as they be not publickly known) ſhould be ſecured ten thouſand pound, or other great Reward, to Swear Popery, and High Treaſon againſt any of the Lords or Commons, (whom they think fitteſt to point out for Deſtruction) and come in, as new Diſcoverers, and ſwear poſitively upon Tryals, in open Court, according to the Laws of this Land: If ſuch Diſcoverers ſhould happen to be detected of Perjury at the Tryal, they know the utmoſt of

 their

their punishment extends not to Life; but if they be not detected, the Partyes so accused, forfeit at once their Lives and Reputation, their Children or next Kindred lose the Estate; and besides, there is intailed, on the Names and Families, of such Unfortunate Persons, a lasting, a perpetual Mark of Shame and Infamy.

Pillory, and Fine, and Imprisonment, are small pains, for this more then barbarous Way of Murdering men, and beggering as well as blasting whole Families.

They who have lost their ears once in the Pillory, have no more to lose, and disgrace touches not where all care of credit is banish'd, and native modesty has given place to Insolence and Impudence it self; A few rotten eggs, and turneps, and dirt, are the only punishment they are liable to suffer, and that never more then three times repeated, and two hours a time at the most.

The Fine is never due, so long as the Offenders stay in Prison, and if they have money,

ney, they may live as plentifully in Priſon as out of it. The Company is ſuch, as lewd perſons are likely to be beſt pleaſed with, and ſo a Priſon cannot be any puniſhment at all, where the Priſoners live in plenty and pleaſant Society.

As for the puniſhment hereafter; if the Perjurers be common Rogues, and Villains, their Conſciences, as well as their hands, are ſeared with a hot Iron; and they never trouble their heads, with things which ſeem ſo far off as Eternity. If Bigotted Papiſts, they are ſo far from fearing puniſhment, that they expect Rewards for ſuch meritorious Service; and ſo theſe two ſorts of perſons, make no difficulty of ſwearing any thing, which carries along with it the Face of a probability; and the aſſurance of a preſent, or hopes of a future Advantage.

Thus then, it appearing, that where Conſcience of Oaths binds not at all, the fear of future Puniſhment is nothing, and while the puniſhment here, of willfull Perjury in Capital Caſes, is ſo diſproportionable to the great-

neſſe of the Crime, I appeal to your ſelves, whether you can believe your ſelves ſafe, any longer then your mortal Enemies are willing to let you be ſo.

Our Laws are defective, in the point of puniſhing Perjury; and the Lives of Honeſt Men are too ſlenderly guarded againſt it, (if they be guarded at all) lying expoſed to the Rapine or Revenge of any two Rogues or Villains, who have wicked Wit enough to make a Combination, and to lay their Lyes cloſe together.

I ſpeak this in relation only to the future, for let them be never ſo Honeſt Men, who are come in already, yet if a Door be ſet open, it may let in another ſort of men among them.

Therefore as you value the Preſervation of the King, and the Government, and the Proteſtant Religion; As you value your own Lives, and the Conſervation of your Families, and the Perpetuating your Good Names and Fames to Poſterity; If you would be

Eſteemed

Eſteemed through the Chriſtian World (as doubtleſſe you deſerve) a Wiſe, Juſt, and a Loyall Parliament, let me beſeech you to find out a preſent Way, to prevent willfull Perjury in Capitall Caſes; and to take care, that it be puniſh'd, in ſuch an exquiſit manner, as the greatneſs of the Occaſion, and the hainouſneſſe of the Offence does deſerve. Otherwiſe you are never likely to know, who are reall Traytors, nor how ſoon ſome of you that are Innocent, may be brought into the number. I pray God Almighty bleſs his Majeſty with long Life, and bleſs your Proceedings with as much Succeſs as you deſire; the ſame tending allways to the Glory of God, and the laſting Peace, and Proſperity of the King and his Kingdomes.

FINIS.

Poſtſcript, March 15. 168$\frac{8}{9}$.

THis Paper was Prepared in *November* laſt, and Intended then to be Preſented to the Speaker of the Honourable Houſe of Commons, but having ſlipp'd That Occaſion, I have Now Expos'd it to the Publique, as a Seaſonable Diſcharge of my Conſcience and Duty.